the escalation of cost resulted due to following reasons:—

(i) New high technology features developed abroad during th© progress of the project had to be absorbed in the system.

(ii) Additional requirements pro-' jected by- the users had to "e incorporated.

(iii) More than one alternative technical approaches had to be followed concurrently.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The production progress is being monitored by a high level 'Project Manegement Board' under the Chairmanship of Raksha Rajya Mantri.

Sale of Defence Land in Hyderabad

2592. DR. YELAMANCHILI ' SIVAJI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state.:

(a) whether it is a fact that defence land in Hyderabad/Secunderabad cantonment is being sold away to civilians, while building of quarters for non-family stationed wives has been shifted to outside the city limits, this causing hardship to thefiv; and

(b) if so, how jnuch of such land has been sold away to .civilians?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Dots not arise.

Inquiry into controversial land transaction in Karnataka

2593. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI;
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

" Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased'to state;

(a) whether Government have set up a .commission of inquiry to investigate into the controversial land transactions in Karnataka;

{b) whether Government are aware of the reports regarding the efforts made by former Chief Minister of Karnataka, to stall the Kuldip Singh Judicial inquiry, set up to enquire into certain land deals;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and the isteps taken by Gavernment to speed up the enquiry; and

(d) whether Government propose *to* set up such a Commission of inquiry regarding the dereservation of 285 plots and handing over those plots only to private builders in Bombay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Three writ petitions have been filed by Ravajeethu Builders and Developers, Shri J. Srinivasa Reddy and Shri A. Laxmisagar in the High Court^ of Karnataka at Bangalore 'Challenging the setting up of Kuldip Singh Commission of Inquiry and requesting for stay of the proceedings of the Commission. Government is, however, not aware of reports regarding efforts allegedly made by former Chief Minister of Karnataka to stall the inquiry. Action is being • taken to contest the writ petitions filed in Karnataka High Court.

(d) There is no such proposal.

Bench mark criterion for promotion of officers in higher grade

2594. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU; ' Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased tp state whether Government are aware that the new Bench Mark Criterion, being adopted for promotion of officers in higher grade/service is a potent, with many serious repercussions of longstanding nature, because of inherent administrative problems like diverse nature of job responsibilities in Civil Administrations,., highly sensitive assignment as well as totally nonrsensitive assignments, diffejent assjgnment standard and. ... different

personality traits of reporting/reviewing officers, the tendency on the part of same officers to hold on to routing jobs etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN. THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY, OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Th© procedure for promotion to higher posts/grades was revised in March, 1989 by introducing a benchmark for each post/grade to determine the minimum suitability for promotion. The benchmark has been prescribed with due regard to level of the posts/grades to which promotions are to be made and the nature and impor> tance of dutie$_s$ attached to them. The objective of this, inter alia, is to ensure high standard of selectivity in promotion to senior level posts. No administrative problems in following the revised procedure have been experienced Qr anticipated.

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Non-conventional measures for family planning

2595. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE he pleased to state what are the non-conventional measures, such as application of natural horbs and barries, under the ICMR research programme for family planning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM); (a) The ICMR under the task force on anti-fertility plant products sponsored research programmes on application of natural herbs and barries. Laboratory explorations were carried but on rodents and a few cases on sub-human primates. Toxicity studies were also .carried out and it was found that most of the anti-fertility plants aad products were toxic; and as such further clinical trials were discontinued. As regards a plant product known «* 'Benjawi* used orally by the tribal women of Bihar in the belief that it provides permanent anti-fertility effect when taken during the post-partum period, the available clinical data, from the ongoing trials at the PGI, Chandigarh is not very encouraging.

Kickback money in Bofors deal

2596. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the then Minister of State for Defence had proposed that Rs. 64 crores and the additional liquidation charges from Bofors must be taken back; if so, what was Government's response thereto;

(b) whether Government propose to ask for part of kickback money from Bofors, acquired by the middlemen over Howitzer gun deal; if so, what are the details thereof and what is the response of Bofors; and

(c) whether the proposal for manufacture of Howitzer guns is being discussed with Bofors; if so, what is the cost of the project and how much payment is to be paid in this connection to Bofors?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. G. PANT): (a) and (b) Having taken the opinion of the Attorney General fo$_r$ India, the JPC had concluded that mere suspicion did not provide sufficient ground for raising claims for reimbursement. The *JPC* also did not find evidence of any kickback.

(c) The details in respect of the proposed manufacture of the howitzers are being finalised. The amounts involved cannot be precisely assessed thi the proposal has been finalised.

Testing of samples in Homoeopathic PhamacOpoef a r aboafory, Ghaziabad

2597. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEffrA; Wfll the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory, Ghaziabod has not been approved and notified as a Government Laboratory unde* the Drugs and Cosmetic, Act, to test